GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PANCHAYATI RAJ
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2195
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2007
PANCHAYATI RAJ SCHEME FUNDS
Patle Shri Shishupal Natthu

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether funds meant for Panchayati Raj schemes are being spent after converting the small schemes into big schemes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the funds meant for backward regions have not been spent;

(d) if so, the reasons therefore;

(e) whether any target have been fixed for spending funds in districts under this scheme;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the measures taken by the Government to ensure utilisation of funds allocated for Panchayati Raj schemes?

Answer

MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR)

(a) & (b): During 2005-06 the Ministry of Panchayati Raj was operating a number of relatively small schemes such as in Training of Elected Representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions, Scheme for Panchayat Raj Development and Research and Scheme for Information Technology. With a view to rationalizing these Schemes, it was decided that these schemes would be subsumed into an umbrella scheme called Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Yojana. Now the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Yojana is being operated with the components of Training and Capacity Building, Research Studies, Infrastructure Development and Information Technology.

(c) to (f): The Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) Programme covers 250 districts in 27 States. The existing Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana (RSVY) has been merged into BRGF Programme. Each district is entitled to receive a minimum developmental grant of Rs.10 crore per annum under BRGF. 50% of the balance allocation under the programme will be allocated on the basis of the share of the population and area of the individual district in the total population and area of all backward districts. Each State will, in addition, receive a capacity building fund calculated @ Rs.1 crore per district. Districts earlier covered under RSVY will receive their total allocation of Rs.45 crore before they shift to BRGF. Under the programme, an amount of about Rs.1603 crores has been released to the States (as on 12 March 2007).

(g) To ensure utilization of funds allocated to Panchayats under BRGF, a monitoring mechanism has been built into the guidelines. While releasing the next instalment, it is to be ensured that 60% of the funds have been utilized. If the opening balance exceeds 40% of the funds available during previous years, the amount in excess of this limit is to be deducted at the time of release of the second instalment. In addition, provision for social audit by Gram Sabhas or Ward Sabhas has been made. The State Government concerned will ensure close monitoring of the implementation of the scheme and provide periodic progress reports and audit reports to the Ministry. The State Government can also identify one or more independent organization for monitoring the implementation of schemes. The Ministry of Panchyati Raj may also carry out its own monitoring evaluation of the implementation of the scheme directly or through independent agencies appointed by it.